

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/088 W

-----081404Z 123677 /44

R 081235Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2548
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
NACC COLLECTIVE
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 5055

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR IN PK
SUBJECT: THE SHAH NAWAZ KHAN VISIT - A PLUS FOR INDO-PAK
RELATIONS

REF: NEW DELHI 4842

1. PAKISTAN POLCOUNSELOR MUJAHID HUSAIN, SAID APRIL 8
THE VISIT OF SPECIAL EMISSARY SHAH NAWAZ KHAN AND
PARTY MUST BE PUT IN CONTEXT OF SIMILAR VISITS TO
ALL MEMBERS OF THE NACC IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CAPITALS
BEFORE THE NEW DELHI MEETING. DURING A CONVERSATION
WITH THE ACTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR, HUSAIN SAID THE
EQUALLY IMPORTANT IN PAKISTANI EYES WAS THE OPPORTUNITY
FOR A HIGH LEVEL VISITOR TO HEAR AT FIRST HANVXD WHAT
PROME MINISTER DESAI AND FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE
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HAD BEEN SAYING PUBLICLY. HUSAIN ADMITTED THAT
SPECIAL VISIT WAS PROPOSED TO THE GOI IN THE ELEVENTH
HOUR, EXPLAINING THAT THIS REFLECTED "BHUTTO'S STYLE".
HUSAIN OBSERVED THAT PAKISTANIS DID APPRECIATE THE
RECEPTION ACCORDED SHAH NAWAZ, BUT ADDED THAT WIHT
SO MANY OTHER VISITING FOREIGN MINISTERS IN TOWN, IT
WAS NOT ALL THAT DIFFICULT FOR THE GOI TO HANDLE

ONE MORE HIGH LEVEL GROUP.

2. THE HOUR LONG DISCUSSION INEVITABLY TURNED TO THE PAKISTAN EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT. HUSAIN SAID THE EMBASSY WAS PLEASED THAT VAJPAYEE SOUGHT AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO CALL IN AMBASSADOR FIDA HASSAN. ACCORDING TO HUSAIN, WHO WAS PRESENT FOR THIS MEETING, VAJPAYEE SAID THAT HE WAS OF COURSE AN OLD JANA SANGH LEADER, AND HAD MADE A NUMBER OF CONTENTIOUS STATEMENTS AS A FOREIGN POLICY CRITIC. VAJPAYEE WANTED HASSAN TO UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT HE NOW OCCUPIED A RESPONSIBLE POSITION AND HE FAVORED THE CONCILIATORY POLICY WHICH THE GOI HAD BEEN PURSUING. HUSSAIN SAID THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY MEHTA TOOK AN ACTIVE PART IN THIS MEETING AND UNDERSCORED THE CONTINUITY OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY. NO MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE WERE DISCUSSED, BUT BOTH SIDES AGREED THE SIMLA PRICIPLES SHOULD GUIDE THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS. THE PAKISTANI EMBASSY SEES BOTH VAJPAYEE AND MEHTA AS SYMPATHETIC INTERLOCUTORS. VAJPAYEE, HUSAIN, ADDED, DID NOT SEEM TOO WELL INFORMED ON THE DETAILS OF CURRENT POLICY QUESTIONS, AND WAS PREPARED TO DEFER TO HIS PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS. THE DISCOURSE AMONG THE FIPLOMATS WAS CONDUCTED IN WHAT HUSAIN DESCRIBED AS COLOQUIAL HINDUSTANI/URDU, IN CONTRAST TO THE CLASSIC HINDI THAT VAJPAYEE USES IN HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCES. THERE WAS NO PROBLEM OF COMPREHENSION, HUSAIN WAS QUICK TO ADD.

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3. SHAH NAWAZ'S CALLS ON THE PRIME MINISTER, APRIL 6, HUSAIN CONTINUED, WENT VERY WELL. THE PAKISTANI EMISSARY EXPLAINED BHUTTO'S CALL FOR A THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC SUMMIT, AND THE PRIME MINISTER RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT HE WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE SUBJECT AND UNABLE TO GIVE A RESPONSE. HUSAIN SAID THEY WERE SATISFIED THAT THE GOI WAS NOT TAKING A PUBLIC STANCE AGAINST THE PROPOSAL, THAT ANSWER WAS PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE TO THE PAKISTANIS ALTHOUGH THEY KNEW THAT THE GOI PRIVATELY WAS DOING EVERYTING IT COULD TO DISCOURAGE BHUTTO'S INITIATIVE. SHAH NAWAZ ALSO CARRIED A PERSONAL LETTER TO DESAI FROM BHUTTO, BUT HUSAIN GAVE NO HINT OT ITS CONTENT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 5055

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

4. ACCORDING TO HUSAIN, SHAH NAWAZ'S CALLS ON THE
FOREIGN SECRETARY AND FOREIGN MINISTER ALSO WENT SMOOTHLY.
HUSAIN SAID SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS WERE NOT DISCUSSED,
NOR WAS THET THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT. HUSAIN SAID
THAT SHAH NAWAZ, MEDHI, AND HILALI DEPARTED
APRIL 7 TAKING A POSITIVE IMPRESSION OF
THE NEW INDIAN GOVERNMENT WITH THEM. ALTHOUGH HE
DID NOT IDENTIFY IT AS AN OFFICIAL ASSESSMENT, HUSAIN
SAID HE HAD A SENSE THAT VAJPAYEE IN HIS NEW POSITION
MIGHT ENJOY A LATITUDE IN DEALING WITH PAKISTAN THAT
MRS. GANDHI DID NOT HAVE. HUSAIN DREW ON THE NIXON
OPENING TO CHINA BY WAY OF ANALOGY.

5. HUSAIN SAID THE NEXT SUBSTANTIVE TOPIC ON THE
INDO-PAKISTAN AGENDA IS A TECHNICAL LEVEL MEETING ON
APRIL 9 AND 10 ON BILATERAL TRADE. THE PAKISTANI
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COMMERCE SECRETARY WILL HEAD THE DELEGATION. THE
MEETING HAS BEEN ON THE CALENDAR FOR SOME TIME, HUSAIN
COMMENTED.

6. HUSAIN SAID THE PAKISTAN EMBASSY WAS FOLLOWING THE NACCFM PROCEEDINGS, BUT HAD BEEN PREOCCUPIED WITH THE SHAH NAWAZ VISIT AND WAS CONSEQUENTLY BEHIND IN ITS COVERAGE. FURTHER QUESTIONING BORE THAT OUT. HUSAIN SAID THAT NEITHER SHAH NAWAZ NOR ANY OTHER MEMBER OF THE EMISSARY'S GROUP HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ANY OF THE NACC DELEGATIONS REGARDING THE BHUTTO INITIATIVE. THAT WAS NOT THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT AND WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN APPROPRIATE, HUSAIN COMMENTED.

7. COMMENT: MEA OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN SO OCCUPIED WITH NACC PROGRAMS THAT IT HAS NOT YET BEEN POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN A GOI VIEW OF THE SHAH NAWAZ VISIT. IN OUR JUDGMENT THE RECEPTION OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY IS AN IMPORTANT STEP BY THE NEW GOVERNMENT IN ITS EFFORT TO PRESENT A FRIENDLY AND REASONALBE IMAGE TO THE SMALLER STATES OF SOUTH ASIA, AND TO DOMONSTRATE A CONCILIATORY POSTURE TOWARDS ITS TRADITIONAL ADVERSARY. IT ALSO PUTS THE STAMP ON CONTINUITY UPON INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY IN THE SUB-CONTINENT. SCHNEIDER

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